

## Land Acquisition and State Assistance/State Conservation Grants

### JUSTIFICATION OF PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE

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Activity: State Conservation Grants

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	2000 Enacted	Uncontr/ Related Changes	Program Changes (+/-)	2001 Budget Request	Change From 2000 (+/-)
State Conservation Grants	20,000	0	+125,000	145,000	+125,000
<b>Total Requirements \$(000)</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+125,000</b>	<b>145,000</b>	<b>+125,000</b>

### AUTHORIZATION

16 U.S.C. 4601-4-11, Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF) Act of 1965, as amended

### OVERVIEW

**The State Conservation Grants** activity provides matching grants to States, and through States, to local units of government for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities that provide public access to lands, waters and other recreation resources. The grants provide incentives for continuing State outdoor recreation planning and for greater commitments by State governments to conservation and improvement of recreation resources at every level, emphasizing the role of States and localities in a nationwide recreation system.

### APPLICABLE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MISSION GOALS

- IIIb Through partnerships with other federal, state and local agencies and nonprofit organizations, a nationwide system of parks, open space, rivers, and trails provides educational, recreational, and conservation benefits for the American people.
- IIIc Assisted through Federal funds and programs, the protection of recreational opportunities is achieved through formal mechanisms to ensure continued access for public recreational use.

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### *State Conservation Grants FY 2000 Estimated Program and Anticipated Accomplishments*

#### **Enacted: \$20,000,000**

In FY 2000, \$20 million was appropriated for State Conservation Grants within the NPS appropriation, and an additional \$20 million was provided to the Secretary of the Interior and made available to the NPS on a reimbursable basis. It is estimated that 3,700 grant applications will be received requesting over \$600 million. Approximately 560 new grants will be awarded for the \$40 million available.

The demand for outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities accessible to urban and growing suburban areas continues to increase. The grant program also recognizes State and local efforts to acquire open space, park and recreation lands and other highly valued resources; and seeks to leverage State and local efforts to address these needs through matching grant assistance.

Since 1965, over 37,000 State and local grants have been awarded totaling in excess of \$3.2 billion. States and localities have matched this amount dollar-for-dollar, thereby doubling the Federal investment. This program has been very successful in encouraging States to take greater responsibility for the protection and development of open space

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and recreation resources. Every project acquired or developed is protected in perpetuity pursuant to section 6(f)(3) of the enabling legislation. Through this partnership with States and local governments, providing recreation opportunity while preserving these areas for future generations can often be accomplished in a more timely and cost-effective way than through Federal action. Therefore, funding for State and local park recreation projects is a viable alternative to Federal management of these areas.

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#### FY 2001 BUDGET REQUEST

	2001 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
▪ State Conservation Grants \$(000)	145,000	+125,000
The FY 2001 request for State Conservation Grants is \$145 million, which represents an increase of \$125 million over the FY 2000 enacted level. The FY 2001 proposed programmatic increase of \$125 million to State Conservation Grants activities includes:		
		\$(000)
▪ State Conservation Grants		125,000
Total		125,000
Justification for this increase is included at the end of this activity's presentation.		

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#### JUSTIFICATION OF FY 2001 BUDGET REQUEST FOR STATE CONSERVATION GRANTS

	2001 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
State Conservation Grants \$(000)	145,000	+125,000

The FY 2001 request for the State Conservation Grants is \$145 million, which represents an increase of \$125 million above the FY 2000 enacted level. The programmatic increase of \$125 million for the State Conservation Grants activity is justified by the proposed changes that follow:

▪ **State Conservation Grants (+\$125,000,000):** The NPS is proposing an increase of \$125 million in FY 2001 as part of the Administration's **Lands Legacy Initiative**. Throughout the Nation, the overriding issue confronting State and local public officials is how to preserve open space in the face of growing populations, increasing demand for land and water resources, traffic congestion, and other pressures. Around the country, voters have approved in the last several years nearly 200 initiatives aimed at controlling or limiting sprawl, preserving open space, and improving their communities. Citizens once again recognize the importance of Fredrick Law Olmsted's vision of open space accessible to the public. The country now has an opportunity to take the "long look ahead," protect lands of national significance and the next great places, and address the needs of communities in tackling the problems of the twenty-first century.

The requested increase of \$125 million, in FY 2001 would significantly increase the Park Service's capability to help States and local units of government address public outdoor recreation needs. In addition to State planning grants, every dollar supports State and local park and recreation areas which guarantee perpetual public outdoor recreation opportunities. Projects range from the acquisition of open spaces, forest lands and natural areas to the development of active use recreation facilities. The State Conservation Grants program is well suited to expanding and protecting

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recreation opportunities in metropolitan areas and other areas of need identified by State and local partners, and the requests for grants has always exceeded the funds available. Examples of projects could include protecting the Vicksburg Battlefield in Mississippi and the Hackensack River watershed in New York.

Of the total request for grants, 40 percent of the \$145 million available would be distributed equally to the States and territories (\$58 million), and 60 percent of the total (\$87 million) on the basis of need; \$72.5 of the \$87 million (or one-half the total requested amount) would be awarded by the Secretary on a competitive project-by-project basis using existing contingency reserve criteria. The net amount awarded for development projects on a nationwide basis shall not exceed one-half of the \$145 million appropriation.